From:	Madison Wilson
To:	Grp. City Council and City Web Site
Subject:	Action is Required: A Suggestion for Defunding the Police
Date:	Thursday, July 30, 2020 5:30:15 PM

City Council:
My name is Madison Wilson and I am a resident of Ward 3 in Missoula, MT. I am a student at the University of Montana, and I am an active member of this community. I have written to you before, and I am writing to you again in favor of defunding the police and reallocating funds to social services in Missoula.

Montana is not immune to racism, and many folks try to hide behind a "lack of diversity" for an excuse to either not be involved or claim that it isn't a problem but that simply is not true. Right here in Missoula, there have been multiple accounts of BIPOC community members being mistreated by the police or other community members. It is deplorable.

Additionally, the case from June 5, 2020, has not been properly addressed. How can you possibly justify giving the police more money when in the midst of creating this budget one of your own civilians has been mistreated by them? I am demanding proper action and accountability is taken for this incident, as well as all other attacks on BIPOC in Missoula! Our community members do not feel safe, and you are not listening to them.

It seems very plain where the values of the city council and Mayor Engen lie if this budget that proposes $19 million for police and only $2 million for housing and community development passes. To show the community you care about *them* and not the police, please consider putting more funding into:

- additional, permanent funding to the mobile crisis response team
- additional funding for the affordable housing trust fund
- mental health
- emergency and transitional housing
- local substance abuse support
- promoting racial equity in public schools
- creating community programs that allow people to police themselves

Lastly, I will leave you with an article about a small town in Kentucky that is working towards this reality: https://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/ny-police-department-hire-social-worker-thousand-arrests-saved-20200729-ql3gvexvf5hvvb5egooomdcoaq-story.html?fbclid=IwAR2cZSxSqrDiK2E6xA93a1AscYnYn0keEpbrBFyhfqZsXvVAn0kxpYgJI8U

I recognize that this will take time, but the current budget reflects a lack of interest in fixing the root of the problem. We have to try *something* if we expect *anything* to work.

Thank you,
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